CDXC Newsletter
CHILTERN DX CLUB
The UK DX Foundation

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: DECEMBER 7th

EDITORIAL

Alan Jubb, G3PMR

Wow! What a fabulous two months - two terrific DXpeditions involving CDXC members, the International HF & IOTA Convention, the FOC Dinner, operating GB1OTA, the start of the winter contest season, and lots of DX about, especially on 30m and 40m.

VK9MM was an outstanding DXpedition, in spite of mediocre conditions - congratulations to John, G3WGV & Steve, P29DX. I'm pleased to say that I managed to work VK9MM when John was on the it was the morning of the Finchley Road bomb! I have to say that the FOC key. As for ZD9SXW - well, what can one say? - a veritable QSO machine! If ever one wanted an example of exemplary operating and pile up control, this was it - well done Roger! I was pleased to work Roger on 3 bands. (I have no antennas for bands LF of 20m at the moment).

I was honoured to be invited as a guest to the FOC dinner at Lords in early October. My host was Jon, GW0FJT. A most enjoyable time was had, although I unfortunately missed lunch, being stuck in a Finchley Road traffic jam for 90 minutes -

members, both UK and overseas, were an extremely welcoming and friendly bunch,

and made me feel very welcome. Of course, many of them are CDXC members.

The International HF & IOTA Convention went very well, especially from the perspective of the visitors; however, as a member of the organizing committee, it was disappointing that numbers were somewhat down on last year. The DX Dinner was a real success - it was good to hear an RSGB President who is a DXer himself! (and a CDXC member). At the dinner, on behalf of CDXC, Keith, G3VKW presented plaques to G4UOL (operating as GD4UOL) and GW4BLE for the highest UK scores in the 1992 CQWW CW low power category and CQWW SSB contesterespectively - well done guys! The planning of next year's event, which is provisionally booked for 7/8/9 October, will be starting soon. There is a huge amount of work involved in planning an event such as this, with over 100 major tasks to be carried out. If you'd like to be involved in organizing the 1994 event (which will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of IOTA), please let me know. Many thanks to G3NUG, G0HXN for help in organizing the CDXC contribution this year, and to all those who helped in various ways at the event itself. Overheard at the DX Dinner: *"How old is Martti Lane?" "50." "Are you sure?" "Yes, there was a programme about her on TV this week" "Her??" "Yes. Marti Caine.""No,no, not Marti Caine - Martti Laine!" "Who's Martti Laine?"*!!!! Congratulations to Nigel, G3TXF, who won the raffle star prize of a TS50.

GB1OTA again attracted a lot of attention on the air- I haven't got all the logs in yet; however, the indications are that last year's total of close to 5000 QSOs will be easily broken. The highest individual total that I have seen so far is 800 QSOs in the day, and there are several others in the 500+ category - more details in the next issue.

The Pratas situation still doesn't seem clear - however, you know the policy - work them first and worry about the status later. The word at the Convention was "don't take your holidays in November!", since confirmed by DXNS. Eritrea has at last been added to the DXCC list - bonus for me, as I have a valid card, as, I am sure, many CDXC members do.

The contest season is well and truly with us, and this issue of the Newsletter has a definite contest bias. I had a bit of fun in the RSGB 21/28MHz CW contest using GB1OTA, although I had to ditch my new keyer after a few QSOs,as it was chopping my CW - it's now back with the manufacturer. By the time you read this, the CQWW SSB contest will have come and gone - I plan to use it for chasing new ones, now that I have the new antenna, which is working a treat - and the CQWW CW test will be imminent. Is anyone going to beat GW4BLE/GD4UOL this year? Congratulations Reading Amateur Radio Society in winning HF NFD for the third successive year. The station was operated by CDXC members Don, G3XTT, and John, G3WGV.

As HF band conditions continue to decline, more and more attention is being paid to the LF bands, where the antenna is the all important thing. Bob, G3PJT, gave a most interesting talk at the IHFC on phased arrays. Bob has also produced a very informative set of bound notes which explain both the principles and practice of phased arrays - copies are available from Bob (QTHR) for £3.00 - I recommend you get a copy!

Congratulations to Keith, G3VKW, and his XYL on the arrival on September 13th of daughter Harriett Jane.

Martin Lynch, G4HKS, sponsor of the IHFC, and advertiser in this newsletter, is having a party, to which all CDXC

members are especially welcome, to celebrate the opening of his new amateur radio store. The party is on November 6th - address on back page - see you there! Martin informs me that there will be visitors from Kenwood, Icom, Yaesu etc, so this is your chance to pick their brains!

The bi-monthly single sheet bulletin (which wasn't produced in August - apologies) is for "hot news" between newsletter issues, so if you have any news of that category, please let me know about it. Things that might be included include DX-pedition news, IOTA updates, DXCC news, contest information, visiting DXers, social events etc. Many thanks to Bren, G4DYO, who produced the October bulletin at short notice.

Well, that about wraps it up for this time! Good DXing and contesting to all - hope you all work Pratas on lots of bands!! 73 Alan, G3PMR

JOTTINGS OF THE SECRETARY - *David Mann, G0HXN*

Well, I am writing this having just arrived home from the IHFC, it was nice to meet so many of you, and it is always nice to put faces to call signs. I gather there were several new members, and quite a few renewals. (*Ed: membership is now up to 140*). Many interesting discussions were held with members during the convention. One item was the provision of insurance in regards to lightning strikes on a variety of electrical equipment. I found there were several different schemes available, all of which were different. It was interesting to find that some companies offer no cover for equipment such as FAX machines which are damaged by lightning strikes. Check your policy - you may not be covered!

Another subject which keeps arising over and over again is the subject of QSLing. It has really got beyond a joke now, but it seems as though it is becoming an accepted way of life that is going to cost you quite a considerable amount of money to confirm a new one. Everybody condemns it, but it still goes on, "2 IRCs", "1 Dollar" etc. etc., is becoming the watch word on some DXpeditions. If one could be sure that the inclusion of same would result in a returned QSL card, it wouldn't be so bad, but now I am sure that some stations are making a very good living out of the amateur fraternity. It is appreciated that some DXpeditions are very expensive affairs, but surely this is what the bureau was intended for. It cannot be beyond the realms of the powers that be, that before a DXpedition is given the OK and accepted for DXCC, all QSL cards have to go through the bureau of the organising country. Hopefully, this would achieve two things, a decent return rate, and more amateurs would join their National Society giving a stronger voice to fight what is going to be, I am sure, pressure on our frequencies from market forces in the not too distant future.

I am sure you all have projects for the winter months; mine this winter is going to be to dig out my morse key, and get back to a reasonable rate before the Spring arrives again. This decision was arrived at because at my work QTH I am helping to run a Novice class, and last week we were listening to the CW on 20m; one local UK station was sending at 20+ wpm, I couldn't read it, but one of the novice trainees was busy copying every single word, his transcription was checked by the other instructor who is an avid morse man, and confirmed that all was correct. It certainly pulled me up short to find out how slow I had become - hence the resolution.

Getting back to the IHFC, it was pleasing to note the number of CDXC members

who were on the top table during the DX Dinner, and also the large amount of input by members to the various lecture streams during the weekend, CDXC was certainly high profile - well done all. Well done also to the Mellish Group - welcome home to John G3WGV, and to Steve P29DX - it was good to hear you on Sunday morning during your sched. All we need now is another Dxpedition to Mellish so that John can work it as well. I am sure that before long we will have the video, book etc., and I look forward to it - if I can't go, I love to read all about it, and see the video. I found the story by Ian (G4LJF) on AH1A one of the most memorable DXpeditions that I have ever read about. The video, with its haunting music has been well produced, and, with Ian's graphic descriptions, it must go down in my estimation as one of the most dedicated acts by a band of amateurs to bring another new one to the rest of us mortals. Well done Ian!

The next big one is Peter 1st. in the New Year. (*Ed - Pratas before that, hopefully!).* I am sure that CDXC will be well to the fore in what ever help we can give to what must be the world's most wanted country.

Finally, I reminder to Committee Members that the next Committee Meeting will be held on November 17th at G3NUG's QTH.

73, and good DX, Dave

ZD8M/ZD8RN

The following is an extract from a letter from Mike, G3OUF, regarding operations from ZD8.

"I fly out to Ascension Island on 13th September, for a stay of 6 months. My call *should* be ZD8M (and ZD8RN for RNARS skeds) - Andy ZD8VJ/G4ZVJ was going to reserve these calls for me, although I cannot confirm them until I arrive at Ascension Island Post Office, it is almost 100% sure. (*Ed: Mike has already been operating as ZD8M*).

I am taking my memory keyer and headphones on the flight so I can use the club station equipment or Andy's gear etc. until my gear arrives on 28th September by sea. I have taken/sent a TS-850s + "small" linear!, Atari STe, KAM v6.1e (including Pactor), TS-700G + 100w 2m amp, 6m transverter with 30 watts out, 70cms transverter. Various antennas and lots of wire and H-100 cable, plus telescopic masts and fibreglass fishing poles. Hoping for a 20m rhombic pointing North - all subject to local conditions, terrain, etc.

I will operate on all bands, mainly CW, but will ensure SSB, RTTY, AMTOR, PACTOR and HF PACKET get a fair crack of the whip. Activity will include the WARC bands, and I will ensure 1.8 CW is looked at carefully - I've got drums of wire going out and hope to have Beverage receiving antennas available eventually.

50Mhz will be checked and reported on in due course - I will try and access the DX Cluster by some means , and surprise you all!

144/432 MHz gear is being taken for satellite working, possibly RS-10 on 29/145 mode, but will look at RS-12 21/29 also, and possibly AO-13, 432/144.

Hope to be with Andy, 'ZVJ for 4 months, so we may show up in the contests. I will be back in the UK mid-March 1994, and hope to see you all at *next* year's HF & IOTA Convention.

QSL, please, via G3UOF, or better, Box 2, Ascension Island, South Atlantic - the latter is necessary to avoid cards going to Paraguay!!
73, Mike, G3UOF (ex EL0N/MM)"

CQWW RECORDS - *Don Field, G3XTT*

As in previous years I have compiled a summary of CQWW records. Hope they are of interest. There were a number of new records set in 1992. G4BUO's excellent score in CQWW CW deserves special mention, as do the new UK multi-multi records (G0KPW on Phone and GW8GT on CW) - both a big increase on the previous UK multi-multi records. G3KMA's effort on 160 in the phone section and that by G3KDB in the CW section are also noteworthy. I have not covered the low-power, QRP or assisted categories, not because they are unimportant but because it would be time-consuming to go back through old records and ensure I have the correct data. If anyone else wishes to do so, that would be much appreciated! However, GD4UOL's effort in CQWWCW '92 in the low-power category is almost certainly a record, and a fine achieve ment.

CQWW Phone:

Class	Area	Call	Year	Points	QSOs	Zones	Ctrys	Notes
Single	World	HC8A	92	16316568	8318	160	508	Op:N6KT
Op/All	Europe	S52AA	92	7134192	4378	151	473	
Band	UK	GW4BLE	90	6329120	4251	138	422	
160m	World	UG7GWO	87	255852	1327	12	57	
	Europe	LZ2CJ	84	107818	1319	13	61	
	UK	G3KMA	92	30822	445	8	8	
80m	World	P40R	87	552786	1628	23	91	Op:K4UEE
	Europe	HA8IE	90	361343	1455	35	116	
	UK	GW4OFQ	91	183590	1180	19	91	
40m	World	PJ9E	92	992068	2183	31	123	Op:OH5BM
	Europe	S59UN	92	875875	2419	37	138	
	UK	G3NLY	91	393908	1512	31	111	
20m	World	VP2KAA	81	2011185	4186	37	150	
	Europe	OH2BH	92	1870170	4008	39	154	Op:OH2IW
	UK	G3FXB	90	1423450	3242	38	137	
15m	World	P40R	90	2719336	4972	37	147	
	Europe	CQ4A	90	1757780	3912	38	141	Op:CT1BOP
	UK	GU5CAA	78	1123380	2729	35	123	
10m	World	ZV5A	91	2984166	5154	37	156	
	Europe	YU3ZV	88	1541603	3219	39	134	
	UK	G3FXB	88	1494048	3338	37	121	
Multi/	World	PJ1B	91	21214809	9418	162	596	
Single	Europe	IQ4A	90	17255700	7253	183	717	
	UK	GU6UW	90	13155792	6997	167	587	
Multi/	World	PJ1B	90	57610400	19655	189	803	
Multi	Europe	LX7A	89	26578978	14947	175	751	
	UK	G0KPW	92	23717638	11017	182	744	

CQWWCW:

Class	Area	Call	Year	Points	QSOs	Zones	Ctrys	Notes
Single	World	EA8EA	91	13225295	6490	171	514	Op:OH2MM
Op/All	Europe	ZB2X	89	5450761	4402	146	429	Op:OH2KI
Band	UK	G4BUO	92	3983382	2854	145	442	
160m	World	UG6GAW	90	164430	851	15	55	
	Europe	ON4UN	90	118776	936	16	68	
	UK	G4OBK	85	63411	511	14	55	
80m	World	NP4A	88	808640	2243	31	102	Op:K1ZM
	Europe	ZB2X	91	435456	1989	29	97	Op:OH2KI
	UK	G3KDB	92	360822	1488	28	93	
40m	World	PJ9U	92	1171864	2655	30	118	
	Europe	S59UN	92	971049	2484	38	135	
	UK	G3FXB	90	557151	1784	30	99	
20m	World	P40V	91	1883700	3521	38	142	Op:N7NG
	Europe	OH2BH	90	915136	2454	36	122	Op:OH6UM
	UK	G3FXB	88	708724	1836	39	124	
15m	World	ZW5B	91	1864372	3525	40	138	Op:LU8DQ
	Europe	OH6MCW	89	775620	2208	37	102	
	UK	G4CNY	92	462985	1304	37	108	
10m	World	CX0CW	90	1890607	3795	39	128	Op:CX8BBH
	Europe	9H1EL	92	794846	2249	39	120	
	UK	G3TXF	89	542572	1334	37	121	
Multi/	World	TA5KA	90	13915044	7201	175	527	
Single	Europe	LZ9A	89	9962386	5342	200	626	
	UK	GW8GT	90	7608432	5206	149	475	
Multi/	World	PJ1B	88	38415760	14921	194	672	
Multi	Europe	LX7A	89	20497632	12735	189	705	
	UK	GW8GT	92	17487927	10250	184	639	

Advance Contest Information *Bruce Gilson, G4WVX*

For those members who like to dabble in contests, below is a list of the bigger contests falling during the life of this issue Newsletter. Space does not permit the inclusion of the full rules, so an abbreviated version is included together with the source of that information.

Some of the information is taken from the same contest last year as often the rules are not published until nearer the time.

FORTHCOMING CONTESTS

Nov 12/14 **JARL International DX (Phone)** (QST Nov 92)
2300-2300Z RS+Scr 80-10m No WARC
Single-op single & multi-band
Multi-op multi-band
Non-JA work JA, JA work non-JA

Nov 20/21 2nd **160m (CW)** (RC Aug 93)
2100-0100Z RST+Ser+County 1.820-1.870 MHz
Single-op only
Work everyone

Nov 27/28 **CQ WW DX (CW)** (RC Oct 93)
0000-2400Z RST+CQ Zone (UK=14) 160-10m No WARC
Single-op single & multi-band
Multi-op single & multi-Tx
QRP (Max 5W output)
Work everyone

Dec 03/05 **ARRL 160m (CW)** (QST Nov 92)
2200-1600Z RST
Single-op QRP(<=5W out),Low power(<=150W out),High power
Multi-op single Tx only
Work W/VE

Dec 11/12 **ARRL 10m (CW & Phone)** (QST Nov 92)
0000-2400Z (Max 36 hrs including listening) RST+Ser
Single-op QRP(<=5W out),Low power(<=150W out),High power
Combined with Mixed mode, Phone only or CW only
Multi-op single Tx, mixed mode only
Work everyone

1994
Jan 07/09 **JARL International DX (CW)** (QST Nov 92)
2300-2300Z RST+Ser 80-10m No WARC
Single-op single & multi-band
Multi-op multi-band
Non-JA work JA, JA work non-JA

There will be a CDXC entry in the ARRL 10m contest. This will take place at G3OZF's QTH near Aylesbury. Sufficient operators have already been found, but others interested should get in touch with me in case anyone has to drop out.

If anyone thinks we should put an entry in for any contest, please get in touch, whether it be outdoors or taking over someone's QTH! Bruce G4WVX

IARU Championship - 10/11 July 1993 *Bruce Gilson, G4WVX*

Several CDXC members helped out the Flight Refuelling Radio Society in this contest. G3OZF, G3XMZ, G3YBT, G4DQW and G4WVX jointly operated two stations as GB5HQ at G3OZF's QTH near Aylesbury, while G3SQX, G4IFB and other members of the Flight Refuelling RS operated as GB4HQ from a QTH in Dorset.

GB5HQ operated on 160, 80, 40 and 20m. Antennas were a TH6DXX and a variety of dipoles and verticals. One of the verticals was hastily erected in the rain just before the contest started! GB4HQ operated on 15 and 10m also using a TH6DXX antenna. All three stations ran full legal power.

At GB5HQ logging was done on two networked PCs running CT. A further PC was keeping an eye on DX Cluster. With the advent of so many new prefixes e.g. 9A, Z3, T9 etc. G3OZF and G4WVX were updating the country files in CT on and off throughout the contest.

Needless to say, having a GB callsign and being a Headquarters station counting for an additional multiplier made us rather popular. We were thus on the receiving end of several pile-ups. Being indoors we did not expect the weather to pose any problems, but we were to be proved wrong. Some unplanned breaks in operating were brought about by very pronounced static rain, which affected all the bands at GB5HQ. By the time the contest ended we were all ready for a good lie down!

Below is the summary of the results combining GB5HQ and GB4HQ:

Band	QSOs	QSO Points	Points/QSO	Zones	HQ Stns
160	16	32	2.00	4	5
80	193	513	2.66	13	8
40	718	2090	2.91	19	13
20	1281	4545	3.55	41	16
15	560	1880	3.36	24	11
10	38	112	2.95	9	3
Total	2806	9172	.27	110	56

Total Score: 1,522,552 points

On behalf of the Flight Refuelling Radio Society, many thanks to all those who took part. Also a special thank you from the GB5HQ team to G3OZF's wife Chris who kept our tummies from rumbling and saved our voices with a liberal supply of beer, coffee and tea etc.!

Bruce G4WVX

WELCOME!!

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to welcome the following new members to CDXC:

G4JGV	Stan Sharred	Hall Green, Birmingham
G0OPB	Tony Canning	Woodley, Reading
G4SJX	Mike Harriman	Leicester
G0IVZ	Jan Fisher	Callington, Cornwall
G0/NZ1W	Maury Peiper	Harrow on the Hill, Middx
JP1NWZ	Yoichi Sakurada	Uithorn, The Netherlands
G4DBN	Neil Smith	Goole, Humberside
HB9KT	David Furrer	Muechenstein, Switzerland
HB9RG	Dr. H. R. Lawser	Hirzel, Switzerland
GW0RTA	Taizo Arakawa	Hawarden, Deeside
EI5DI	Paul O'Kane	Dublin, Ireland
NN2C	Martin Miller	Melville, NY, USA

I hope that you will all enjoy being members of CDXC, The UK DX Foundation, and that you will get involved in the various projects throughout the year.

David Mann, G0HXN, Secretary

DX CALENDAR (*Tnx, DXNS*)

NOW	ZS8MI	Oct 24-Nov 2	V73IO	
Til early Nov	ZK2XX by ON4QM	Oct 25-29	KH8 by W's	
Til Nov	HL93 prefix	Oct 25-Nov 1	A61AD by WB2DND	
Til Nov	AF-030 ZD9CQ	Oct 25-Nov 5	9H3AM by G3VLX	
Til Nov 1?	EP by UA's	Oct 26-Nov 2	C6 by W's	
Til Nov 3	SA-029 ZY1UP	Oct 26-Nov 2	VP5 by W's	
Til Dec	Antarc CE9OH	Oct 26-Nov 2	PJ2/OH1VR	
Til Dec	OH3MIG/4U (YK)	Oct 27-Nov 2	FM by N3ADL	
Til Dec	5Z4JD by F2JD	Oct 28	AS-021 A61AD	
Til Dec	EL2YD by F6FYD	Oct 28-Nov 2	V47 by W9NSZ	
Til Jan	ZD8VJ by G4ZVJ	Oct 28-Nov 3	C56 by W's	
Til Jan 16	CQ8C (CT)	Oct 30-31	SA-026 ZY0PS	
Til Mar	AN-017 FT5YE	Oct 30-31	CQWW SSB Contest	
Til Mar	T5/N3HQW	Oct 30-Nov 2	SA-033 by HC's	
Til mid-Mar	ZD8M	Oct/Nov?	5A0A by SP6RT?	
Til Apr	FH/F5NCU	Nov??	BV9 Pratas I??	
Til Apr	S Geo VP8CKB	Nov 5-10	N6SVL/KH2	
Til Apr	XT2DK	Nov 6-13	VK9XZ by VK6VZ	
Til Jun	8Q7AA by JG2XYV	Nov 8-??	9G1JI by G6LJU	
Til mid-94	JW5NM	Nov 10-17	V63UF by G4IUF	
Til Aug	9X5AB by DF3ZJ	Nov 13-14	WAE RTTY Ctst	157
Til Aug 95	ET3JR by FD1PJQ	Nov 15-Dec 1	3D2 by IV3UHL	
Oct	SWL Challenge	Nov 17-24	V73UF by G4IUF	
Oct	5N33 prefix	Nov 19-21	SEANET Conv. Dhaka	
Oct/Nov	S2 by PA3BTQ	Nov 21-Dec 1	EP by DL's?	
Oct 20-27	VK9CG by JA3JA	Nov 24-29	T32 by W/KH6	
Oct 21-Nov 4	C5 by VE's	Nov 27-28	CQWW CW Contest	
Oct 21-Jan 6	KH4/N7TNL	Dec 1-Jan 31	A35 by IV3UHL	
Oct 22-24	ZX7SM by PS7AB	Jan/Feb	SS P & P Rocks	157
Oct 22-29	VP8GAV S Geo.	Jan 31-Feb 16	3D2 by IV3UHL	
Oct 23-Nov 2	KP2 by CT1BOH	Feb 1-17	3Y PETER 1	
Oct 24-31	AS-026 HL93KZW	Feb 16-Mar 8	ZK1(S) IV3UHL	
		Mar 8-Apr 1	FO8 by IV3UHL	

Cluster Update
Keith Evans, G3VKW

Hi all! As the liaison man between the UK Packet Cluster Working Group and the Chiltern DX Club, I would like to inform you of the latest progress, being made to the system, known to me.

Bob G4BAH has spent a great deal of time, effort, and invested a considerable amount of money, in trying to improve his Links out of GB7DXM, these fall into 3 categories:

1, A 23cm link from GB7DXM to G3MLO nr Canterbury in Kent which is now operational, and shortly, all being well onwards to G4BLX nr Brighton, which will then bring GB7DXM into the 23cm system which already links GB7DXS, GB7DXH and GB7DXI together. This will mean the users of these 3 Clusters will get the Eu spots considerably faster, as this will be a Cluster only trunk route, and the users of GB7DXM will be tied into the 3 main London Clusters. For Cluster users one thing perhaps that is not fully appreciated is as all these links are at extreme 23cm range, this requires the nodes to change frequency at G3MLO and also at G4BLX, to stop what is called hidden node effect. What this means is at both G3MLO and G4BLX there are 2 23cm rigs, 2 TNCs, 2 antennas and 2 lengths of heliax, or very simply put A Lot of Money invested for your benefit "The User"

2, From GB7DXM a link North to GB7YDX is being worked on, this routes via G4LPL, then onwards to the Sheffield Hub "SHEFF" this Link presently uses "limited protocol" as the reliability is fragile; once this is improved then hopefully the link will be able to carry normal Cluster protocol, and should then be able to replace the GB7DXH to GB7BPQ North South link which as most users will appreciate "falls down" frequently, also due to the 23cm link DXH - DXM (see above) and fewer nodes in the chain, north south traffic should be speeded up considerably.

3, Another 23 cm link from GB7DXM is soon to be in place, routing to G6CKK in North Kent, then onwards to LONNY (London - New York) then on to the K2RV Cluster, which will mean 99% reliability on this link, which is already in place but using a NTS route. This is a very "Limited Protocol" link mainly for ARRL and OPDX Bulletins and WWV figures.

David G3OUF, sysop of GB7DXH, has found a new site on the Chilterns, which although early days, may well provide the proposed link from GB7DXH to GB7DXC, thus saving a very long NTS Link which feeds DXC from YDX and then onwards to DXD, SMC, WDX,and PDX, thus speeding up info to many users.

Chris G4HCL Sysop GB7SMC reports he is ready to go with a 23 cm Node on Butser Hill nr Petersfield in Hampshire, when he finally gets long overdue permission by the site owners to install his antennas. This will link GB7SMC to GB7DXS and into the main S.E. Cluster Network. and hopefully bring with it GB7DXD.

I hope the above is of interest to all users. Also a plea! All the Clusters and a lot of the nodes which we use are provided voluntarily, If your own cluster has poor linking, and you think you have a reasonable VHF / UHF site and think you

might be able to help in the "chain" why not approach your local sysop. Your local group would probably supply the equipment, and a node needs no real management, requires only a small amount of space for rig, TNC , PSU and antenna, and your sysop may not realise how good your QTH may be.

Also remember the investment being made on your behalf" a 23cm node costs about 750 pounds to install !!!!

73's and good DX to you all, Keith G3VKW sysop GB7DXS.

ONE MAN'S MEAT?
Brendan McCartney, G4DYO

Whenever a major DXpedition hits the airwaves two discussions immediately commence - often on the DXpedition tx frequency!

Firstly, the behaviour of and techniques employed by the DXpedition operators: Are they handling the pile-ups efficiently? Are they giving adequate and equal coverage to all areas. Are they are giving adequate attention to all bands? Are they are equally active on both CW and SSB (and RTTY?), etc. Do they identify themselves frequently enough? Do they pass out QSL information regularly? Do they indulge in any "dubious" techniques - lists, nets, asking for "last two", etc. In a nutshell - are they doing a good job?

Secondly, the behaviour of and techniques employed by those calling in the pile-ups. Do they LISTEN before attempting to call? Do they persist in calling on the DXpedition tx frequency when it is working split? Do they persist in asking stupid questions, such as "when will you be on 80m?", "when will you work Europe?", "what is the QSL route?". "what is your call?", etc., etc., etc. And do they shout abuse at other amateurs? Do they attempt to "police" DXpedition frequencies (even when the DXpedition is txing - a Cardinal sin)? Do they, Heaven forbid, persist in telling everyone where the DXpedition is listening by hollering "213", "224", "202", etc. on the DXpedition tx frequency?

The answers to the first questions lay with the DXpedition operators themselves. One hopes that most amateurs who mount major DXpeditions to rare DX countries will have a) some experience of DXing/contesting, b) understand the mechanics of propagation and c) be adequately equipped, prepared and able to fulfil the needs of the Deserving. There is little that the average DXer can do about this other than to keep his fingers crossed and hope that those taking part have carried out full preparation for the task ahead. Occasionally one may have close contact with DXpedition members and perhaps polite advice may be heeded by less-experienced participants. For example, during the tortuous journey to South Sandwich Martti Laine offered advice to those in the crew who had never undertaken such a task previously. His wise counsel obviously paid dividends. There is no such thing as "proper training" for DXpedition work but the standard technique of "contest-style" working means that anyone with contest experience will be a useful member of the team and an asset to those DXers in the pile-ups. Effective and authoritative communications technique will prove to be of benefit, not like the guy who says: "go ahead the X-Ray Mike..... roger November Two Yankee Delta 59 QSL?". That's the sure way to cause chaos, but how many times have you heard it? And the guy working by numbers who dishes out contacts to callers from wrong call areas. How would he feel if he was in a pile-up and that happened?

The answers to the second questions are more obscure. A pile-up may contain

amateurs with immensely different racial, cultural and behavioural backgrounds, as well as those from countries where amateur licences are virtually given away with cornflakes and regulations of token status only, ie not policed (UK?). To some nationalities the idea of joining a queue is unheard of; how can we expect people to await their turn patiently when they have been brought up to barge their way to the front? We English always expect others to speak our language fluently, but large numbers of amateurs can only hold "rubber stamp" English language QSOs and a DXpedition operator who issues complex instructions may not be fully understood. Problems exist among amateurs here at home - a tattooed, skin-head type is unlikely to obey a polite request from an OAP to "QRX pse OM"!!! More significantly, in recent times financial constraints have resulted in government cut-backs and the policing of amateur radio bands is of a very low priority; in many countries virtually non-existent. This, combined with a general lowering of standards and easing of licensing examinations means that many amateurs are little more than CBers. That is NOT said with any disrespect, but when one hears two newly licensed G stations on 80m asking what "SWR" means it implies a lack of knowledge which would have been unheard of a few years ago.

The recent VK9MM Mellish Reef DXpedition certainly provided "One Man's Meat". Being a shift worker the usual laws meant that I was working for a goodly part of the time they were QRV so I was unable to spend much time listening. However, on the few occasions when I did listen they seemed to be 59+ and racking up the Q's at a tidy pace. I worked them on 17m, both phone and CW, barefoot - first call each time. I heard them two days running on 40m, S8-9 on both occasions but they were just QSYing to work the USA (Grrrrr - they plainly did NOT understand LP prop to EU on 40m!). Cluster spots and reports to DXNS suggested that the team was worked on all HF bands from the UK with the exception of 160m. This, plus the ANNOUNCES on the Cluster and phone calls from other DXers led me to believe that VK9MM had certainly done a good job. To my great surprise I then started hearing tales of G's who were either very dissatisfied or disappointed: *"I listened all day and never heard them"; "Every time I heard them they were working Japan"; "Three of us in this area, with beams ranging from a KT34 at 60ft to dipoles never worked them"*. Then I received a letter from a keen DXer and FOC member:

"If the Cluster is to be believed then I am in need of a new antenna! Until I read DXNS I had reached the conclusion that the VK9MM gang had gone QRT in favour of sunbathing. Conditions have been poor or patchy at best, I know, but as far as I am concerned the Mellish operation rates as the second worst ever. Peter 1 was the worst.

"I did hear the VK9MM gang on 14005 around 1600z on Saturday 18th but they were very weak. On the Monday I listened again and found them again, but again their signal was very weak.... That was the last time I heard anything of them.

"During last week I worked a VK3 who was putting in a 599 signal on 20m so conditions have not been all that bad in that direction - I get the uneasy feeling that they didn't put in the effort shown by other DXpeditions."

Approximately 200 spots for VK9MM were input to the Cluster, which is a high number by any standards. My opinion is that the team did a superb job, under fairly patchy propagation conditions. One or two things aggravated me - operating CW in the phone band (18145), participating in lists (14243) and switching from EU to the USA on 40m when the band still had an hour of propagation left for western

Europe. But, my 17m contacts pleased me; it was only later that I discovered that the "VK9" on my scribbled CW wants list referred to Willis and not Mellish, still it was a new 17m slot! You know where you can go next guys!

When criticising a DXpedition DO remember what the operators have gone through - usually a large financial outlay, which will likely not be recovered; possibly travel under poor conditions and, even more likely, several weeks living in the most dreadful conditions known to man! And always remember that every DXpedition is lousy before you work it and the best ever once it's in the log!

Two CW Mini-breaks in Brunei
Nigel Cawthorne, G3TXF

Two short CW mini-breaks have been made to Brunei. The first was for five days in September 92 and the second was for a week in September 93. Operating facilities on both occasions have been courtesy of Peter V85PB (G3ZSS) who has an excellent QTH on the edge of the South China Sea at Seria. Seria is the Shell HQ town just a few kilometres from the border with 9M8.

The objective of each visit has been simple: to give as many V85 CW QSOs as possible during the short stays. Although Brunei is not too rare, as there are a number of V85's active on CW, it can nevertheless still generate a healthy pile-up. A combined total of 11,759 QSOs was made during the two V85XF operations.

Declining sunspots

The QSO-by-band break-down for the two trips tells a story in itself. The greater concentration of QSOs on 20m and 17m in 1993, as compared to 1992, reflected a marked downwards shift in the optimum frequency for HF propagation. In 1992 15m had provided 31% of the QSOs, whereas in 1993 the same band provided only 16% of the QSOs. By contrast 40m had accounted for just 3% of the 1992 QSO total but in 1993 the same band accounted for over 11%.

As well as the declining sunspot numbers (the SFI was at around 80 for most of the 1993 operation) there was also an improvement in the LF antenna between 1992 and 1993. A GAP Explorer-IV (which covers 160-80-40m) was installed in 1993 replacing the Butternut that had being used the previous year on the LF bands. It had been hoped to work Europe on 160m with the GAP, but despite several attempts V85XF's signal just couldn't be heard in Europe. Only a handful of JA's were worked on Top Band.

On 80m there were good openings to Europe on several evenings (European time, i.e. around dawn in Brunei) but the propagation certainly favoured the northern Europeans with good numbers of SM, OH and LA's in the log. G's accounted for just 13 of the 187 different EU's worked on 80m.

QSO analyses

Peter V85PB's QTH has a clear sea take-off towards Europe. Europeans accounted for 63% of the QSO total during 1993, and JA's 26%. The W's accounted for only 5% of the QSO total during 1993 whereas they had accounted for about 20% in 1992, further reflecting the poorer HF propagation during the second visit.

V85XF CW QSO totals and % by band

Band	1992		1993	
160m	---	--	16	--
80m	112	2%	340	5%
40m	163	3%	717	11%
30m	445	9%	668	10%
20m	1,152	23%	2,292	34%
17m	869	17%	1,451	21%
15m	1,569	31%	1,043	16%
12m	529	11%	146	2%
10m	157	3%	58	1%
6m	32	1%	---	--
Total	5,028	100%	6,731	100%

One final thought. On checking the Great-Circle map from V85 with Peter V85PB just before leaving, we noticed that apart from getting across the island of Borneo, the radio signal path from V85 to ZD9 in

the South Atlantic is water all the way. Peter should have no trouble getting ZD9SXW. Thanks again Peter for the use of your fine station for my two mini-CW DX operations as V85XF.

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOGS (Part II)

Andrew Shaw, G0HSD

The Official 4K4D and 4K4N Story (From the book Now (that's what I call DXing))

Departure

As I crossed off the days, I picked up the rest of the gear. A new Karrimore Jaguar S85 rucksack, clothing, medical supplies and so on. I was still waiting for my visa, so I decided to phone the travel agent in Kensington to try and find out what was going on. I was told that the Russian embassy were refusing to release my passport and visa until 21 May, a Friday - the Friday before my departure on Tuesday 25th! Brother! I asked them to hold the passport at the travel agents and I would travel to London to collect it in person. I did no want to risk them putting it in the post. I telephoned Sandpiper Communications in Swansea in order to get some lengths of aluminium tubing in order to sleeve the broken down tribander together. They told me the aluminium would be with me the following day, which was great.

Friday 21 May arrived. I called Thomas Cook and Louise told me that there was no sign of my passport. I asked her to contact the Russian Embassy and to see what was going on. She reported that, "They have put it in the post." Oh Buddha! Why the hell had they done that? The Embassy was less than a third of a mile's walk from the travel agents, and they have couriers in there daily. Oh heck, a rather ill-timed spanner in the works. I met Victor on frequency at the usual time and explained what had happened. If Thomas Cook did not get my passport on the Monday, I was stuffed. Victor was very anxious and told me that he had decided that we were to fly straight of Moscow only five hours after my arrival so it was imperative that I made the flight. In addition to this the aluminium had not arrived!

Saturday. Nothing. I called the travel agent again and got the same reply. There was nothing else for it but to wait. I telephoned my cousin Sue in Surrey to see if I could borrow a ski bag. My mother had the brilliant idea of transporting the beam in a ski bag. She had a spare one, so I took it home and managed to fit all the sections of the antenna into it, with a little room to spare for some toilet rolls.

Monday 24 May arrived all too quickly. This was going to be a hell of a day. I motored into Aylesbury to do some last minute shopping. I needed film, bandages, antiseptic etc.. While there I called into the branch of Thomas Cook and asked them to phone Kensington to see if my passport had arrived. No. But the second post was due about an hour later and they would call me at home then. I drove back home, via the supermarket, and my father said that they had phoned and it was in London waiting for me. So back in the car to the station and I hopped on the next train to London. A quick dash through the underground system and I was at Kensington High Street. Boy, was I glad to have that passport in my hands!

I dived back on the train and found I had to walk from Risborough to home across the fields as my father was out. Once home I found that the lengths of aluminium had arrived. Out came the hacksaw and the black and Decker, and the antenna took shape. It all fitted perfectly, being held together by self tapping screws and the aluminium was a perfect fit. I hurriedly

continued filling my rucksack and by now I was very hot and sweaty. I had arranged to spend the evening with Kaye, a picnic in a field. So I ran upstairs and had a bath - probably the last for a long time I thought!

The Trip At Last!: Arrival!

Tuesday May 25 1993 was finally here. Albeit by only a few minutes! It was 3:40 am and it was time to make the journey to Heathrow to catch my plane, the start of my expedition to Russia.

I loaded everything into the car, including the tri-band antenna in the ski bag. My rucksack was very heavy and I was beginning to worry about check-in, and whether I would get clobbered for excess baggage charges. My allowance was 20 Kg. My antenna weighed 13.8 KG and my rucksack was over 22 Kg. Almost twice over!. Luckily the flight was not heavily booked and I was not charged.

Naturally, my holdall sent the X-ray machine stupid and I had to empty the contents out onto the counter. This was no quick task, as I had crammed all my goodies for Russia inside. Pairs of stockings, lipstick, (Not for me I hasten to add!) etc. Loads of mail for others and a brand new Vibroplex Morse key destined for Nazim RI8AA. This totally foxed the security staff and I had to give a full demonstration. Eventually it was all repacked and my duty free bottle of Talisker and two hundred Silk Cut were firmly in hand.

Moscow airport was on a scale of chaos never before witnessed. It was unbelievable. There was one long, snaking carousel that stopped and started, chugging it's way round. The place was packed with hot, sweaty bodies, screaming babies and frantic, elbowing old ladies. There were piles of boxes containing TVs, HiFis and other goods. Trollies were $1 each to hire. There was a pile five deep of people frantically grabbing their bags off the heap. I located the beam and then picked up my rucksack. I struggled through the seething mass with a back breaking load to the customs area and the X-ray machine. Oh Buddha, this would be fun. The chap gesticulated that he wanted my rucksack through the machine, followed by the ski bag. The ski bag needless to say was far too big for the X-ray, so we reversed it in. The officer was deeply confused. "What the hell is this?" his face read. He did not speak English, and my Russian only led to obtaining a drink. He realised that if he asked me what it was we would spend hours trying to make sense of things. He screwed up his face and waved my through. A miracle!

I then battled through the very narrow door out into the bustle of Moscow airport. Between all the taxi drivers, housewives and screaming kids I saw Harry RA3AUU and Alex UV3DPP who were there to meet me. Waiting in his Lada was Andy UA3AB, and somehow, all four of us plus luggage were bundled into the vehicle and sped off on the pot-holed belt way round the outside of Moscow.

Soon we headed into Moscow and for Alex's place. All of a sudden, all the cars in front of us split up and made off in random directions. I suddenly realised that the road had ceased to exist, all that was left was a surface that looked like it had been severely land mined. Muddy puddles became deep lakes and thick mud was abundant. The huge, sterility of concrete blocks of flats loomed out of the dull grey ski and gave the area a look of down town Beirut. The buildings were in a shocking state of repair, and looked like that they had been shot up by heavy artillery. All should have been condemned and all looked perilous. Each block was of about fourteen floors in height and each floor had roughly six flats. They were appallingly

constructed pre-fabs and all of them bowed in the middle, meaning that the balconies that spanned the centre appeared like a shallow chevron from top to bottom. All the balconies looked decidedly dangerous.

Another dash in the souped up Lada (with Sony stereo system!) across town to Andy's flat. He was a wheeler dealer of some sort and had equipped his flat accordingly. CD player, FT1000 with TL922 and a video cam-corder to boot! Andy's wife has cooked some macaroni cheese and we ate this with my first of many helpings of cucumber. As I was munching some people arrived. It was Victor, George and Yuri. Victor poked his head around the door and said Hi. He was huge, six foot four and weighed well over one hundred kilos as we later discovered. It was great to meet him after so many hours of conversation on the radio. I wolfed down the rest of the cucumber and went into the living room.

I met George and Yuri. George seemed to be in his fifties, with grey hair and squat, grey face. I was later told that it was working at Chernobyl that had prematurely aged him. Yuri was a typical Yuri. Very fit, wearing a track suit with no shirt underneath. He did not smoke (unlike the others) and rarely touched alcohol. He was a radio engineer by profession.

And Departure So Soon

We arrived at the airport, and there was more fierce banter as the gear was unloaded from the cars. This place was worse than the first. This was the airport for internal flights only and it was extremely decrepit. The lighting was very dim. Everything was grey concrete with no effort made to brighten the place up. It was a dingy dive. We moved inside. In the centre of the hall, we took our luggage to a man at a desk, who proceeded to wrap it all in white paper, done up with packing cord. Why, I asked? Nobody knew, not even the guy doing the wrapping. Very strange. As we had a huge amount of baggage, I was asked to make my 22Kg rucksack appear very light. I took it on as hand luggage. After the bulk of the gear was weighed and sent onto the conveyer, George suggested we got a beer from the bar further up the hall.

Two friends of mine had warned me several months before hand, never to travel on an internal flight in Russia. Apparently they go missing without trace. I had been prepared for old aircraft, held together with an assortment of bandages and rubber bands. The aircraft in front of me now was something else. It was a brand new IL-86, the Russian copy of the Airbus. It was shiny and very clean. We got closer and closer and, to my surprise, gorgeous stewardesses. They were incredible! Again a total surprise after a lifetime believing that all Russia women looked like Rosa Klebb off the Bond films.

Norilsk

We landed in Norilsk at roughly eight o'clock the following morning. I was now very tired and seven hours ahead of UK time. We left the plane and the sexy stewardesses and walked out across the tarmac. The place was covered in snow! I was not really expecting this so far south. Victor too was surprised. There were some prehistoric aircraft, propeller driven, sitting on the ground. The place was very noisy and dirty. We headed for the departure gate, which was literally that. It was a gate in the snow which opened and let us out into the street in front of the main building. George and Victor went inside and managed to rescue our stuff.

The airport was even worse than Moscow, and I can honestly say that it is by far the worst airport I have ever seen. The central hall was large, with a black marble or stone

floor, liberally sprinkled in dust and dirt. There was a large amount of litter and empty beer bottles. At one end was a large display board announcing the times of the departures and arrivals and beneath that a swarming mass of bodies queuing. Victor joined one of these queues and it was clear he was trying to get tickets on the next flight to Dikson.

Outside the airport there was a huge area filled with old busses, army trucks and cars. This square was flanked on two sides by the dilapidated airport buildings, another by a huge pile of snow that had been ploughed away from it and the other by the recognisable blocks I had seen in Moscow. There was a road dead ahead that was the only road away from the airport. It disappeared off into the horizon and was followed by a train of electricity and telephone cables. I stood on the steps of the airport, which were crumbling and exposing the steel reinforcement rods, rusting in the filth and concrete.

Victor eventually caught up with me and explained that he could not get tickets for that afternoon, and, unfortunately, we would have to spend an night in the infamous hotel. The hotel was one of these featureless blue blocks, with no outward method of detection. It apparently cost 600 Roubles (60 USc) for all four of us for the night. Any more would have been robbery. This was a hole. We were ushered into a small room on the second floor, which faced the deafening airport. The room was furnished with four beds, a table and a chair. The beds were of the metal framed variety, and the granite soft mattress of hessian was covered by a grey sheet, spotted with dried blood. The floor was of red, warped lino and the walls were hospital blue.

George and Victor started setting up the IC-720 and a long wire out of the hotel window. Yuri unpacked the food and this was added too by George's "Ukrainian Narcotic". George had this small hessian bag with a huge lump of salted pig fat. Pure fat, no meat. He told me that this was a speciality in the Ukraine. God they must be hard up! It looked vile, and contradicts all the rules of hygiene and good health that we are brought up with in the west. The inevitable happened, and thinking of the 'when in Rome...' cliché, I took a piece along with some of the bread. It tasted as it looked, totally revolting. It stuck to the teeth, and there was a muffled ripping sound as one bit through veins and capillaries. The others wolfed it down with glee, only Victor knew that I was not enjoying the experience. He then explained to the others that in the UK the idea of eating pure fat was unheard of.

All too soon it was 5 am and time to wake and get ready to go with Victor to Norilsk city. He had managed to secure some tickets for that day's flight to Dikson with the office. We had to go to Norilsk to pay for and collect them. We trudged over to the railway station, which was no more than a parked train at the end of a single track. There was no platform, so it was a good jump to climb aboard. The old ladies seemed remarkably agile.

Before long the pink layer of air that I spotted the night before was fast approaching. We were coming into Norilsk. Victor told me that Norilsk was one of the largest mining towns in the whole of the former Soviet Union. Copper and nickel were mined along with a host of other raw materials. After an hour and twenty minutes we had arrived. The place was filthy. Everywhere you looked there was black. The snow was no longer white, it wasn't even grey or brown. It was a thick, dull black. All along the railway track there were huge banks of the stuff. There were enormous grey chimneys reaching for the sky and painting it with thick smoke. There were giant slag heaps

all around the outskirts of the city, covered in the black snow. The whole place looked as if absolutely no thought had gone into the physical or mental health of the population, I would imagine in a similar way to Victorian northern England.

We climbed off the train, I breathed in the air and choked. Air the consistency of syrup. We walked across from the station to the bus stop, where we froze in the snow waiting for the bus into the centre of town. The melting snow which was piled into the very wide central reservations of the streets, oozed it's oily water into the street, which filled potholes to overflowing and made walking quite damp. Every bus that passed sent a shower into the air that cascaded down onto the unsuspecting.

We caught the number twenty three, that led us into the centre and dropped us close to the Aeroflot office. We walked a few yards up the street. The office was still closed, it was after all, only 7.30am. But there was already a queue. People standing in a small clump of about fifteen or twenty in number. Goodness knows how long they had been standing there , but they had another two hours to wait before the doors opened.

The crowd at the Aeroflot office had swollen dramatically, and there was a great deal of pushing and shoving. All of a sudden, at 9am, the doors were thrown open and the crowd punched, pushed and kicked, fur hats were knocked to the ground and there were cries of helplessness as people got left behind and thrown to the back of the queue. These were desperate people in desperate times.

We eventually managed to squeeze into the office. It was not like an airline office, but a Victorian hospital. To the left of a short corridor were the desks, behind partitions similar to a bank. We got to the front of the queue, with the help of Victors bulk, and he mentioned that we had phoned the day before, and that we had reserved tickets. We were asked to follow the lady into the back room, where the negotiations took place. I had brought a couple of mars bars to help our bargaining position.

We were seated and were told to wait. There seemed to be a problem that I did not understand, but within twenty minutes things were sorted out. The price for George, Yuri and Victor was 40,000 Roubles for the three of them, about $40, one way. My ticket on the other hand was 250,000 Roubles return, about $250! Hold on I thought. This seemed to be totally unjustified and improper. As I was a tourist the price had inflated. But did we have any choice? We had to get to Dikson and this was the only way.

The Yakov 40 is not one of Aeroflot's successes. All the aircraft are over twenty years old and have rarely seen a service, not to mention that one is lost every month on average. I just hoped that this one did not have my number on it. Victor and George unloaded the truck and Yuri and I, and the rest of the passengers, fought our way through the rear tailgate of the jet to load the stuff inside. It was a squeeze. The thing holds roughly forty passengers plus cargo. Most of us seemed to hold our bags on our laps.

Before long the hour and a half, seven hundred kilometre flight almost due north was at and end, we could see open water, and the small town of Dikson was dead ahead. It had been a good if basic flight, but I was still very glad to touch terra firma again.

We climbed out of the plane onto the flat compacted snow of the taxi way. The sky was beautifully clear and I could see, turning my back on the sea, the settlement of Dikson Island and Port Dikson in the distance. We had arrived. This was as far

north as I had ever been and much further north than ninety nine per cent of the world's population would ever go. The air was clear and fresh and the temperature was a cool plus two degrees.
There were a small number of personnel floating around the aircraft as we unloaded. One of them stepped forward and shook Victors hand. This was Peter 4K4BEU, 'our man in Aeroflot'. He was a well built chap, wearing a leather flying jacket and a huge beaver fur hat. He had a very stern face and spoke only very limited English - he was a CW man. We were ushered into the four wheel drive and driven over to the airport building some four five hundred metres away. Yuri and I then unloaded the gear and took it inside, while Victor and George headed off with Peter to discuss the charter of the helicopter.

They eventually reappeared and the news was not good. The charge for the helicopter had gone up dramatically. We had budgeted for 100,000 Roubles per hour, it had gone up to 250,000 Roubles due to inflation and fuel increases brought in by Yeltsin only days before. This was not good news, it looked that without a miracle we would not be able to get to all three of the island groups as planned. Victor said however, that we should be able to get to the Nordenshel'da group and we would be able to stay on the polar base with a family.

Victor then led us across the road (it would have been but for two metres of snow!) to the Aeroflot building. This seemed to be the administration area. Peter led us through into one of the back rooms . Immediately, George started to unpack some food, including my Branston and laid it out on the table. Peter reappeared with two others who all sat down around the table. One of these chaps was George, the head of the helicopter division. George presented him with a bottle of Royal spirit, this went down a treat and he proceeded to mix up a bottle of vodka to drink. He put his thumb over the top of the mixing bottle and gave it a thorough shake, then removed his thumb and ignited the fumes with his lighter to great applause from the others. We tucked into the food and again I dared a piece of the Ukrainian narcotic. There was a lot of discussion. Victor leant over and whispered a commentary in my ear. This was not just a meal, it was a business meeting. The vodka was flowing to try and persuade the chief to let us go to the islands. He was not keen on the idea and explained that, sorry though he was for the fuel increases, there was nothing he could do. He said that prices had gone up so much that it meant that they were unable to fly all the routine trips they were supposed to, let alone do one off journeys for hams. He said that the current price of 250,000 Roubles ($250) was being doubled again in a few days time to half a million Roubles per hour. Victor was unhappy and explained that we only had a budget of three million for the entire expedition, including that already spent getting up to Dikson. Half a million and hour would mean that it would cost 3.5 million just to do one island group.

Eventually, Yuri and I staggered out of the building having got totally sloshed. We collected some the gear and started to head for the hotel. Peter joined us and quietly explained to me that both he and his boss were very sorry and there was nothing they could do and that all expenses had to be justified to Moscow. He invited me back to his house to meet his wife and to eat with them.

The following day, Victor made a start at putting the beam together. I put on my fleece and coat, laced up my boots and trudged through the snow to help him. We had decided to erect the antennas at the back of the hotel. Between the hotel and the next block of homes was a space of about twenty metres. Under the snow there

was a lot of debris, which proved to be very dangerous when it came to falling over in the snow. The weather was overcast but the wind was still and it was a steady +2C. I used my thin thermal gloves to handle the different parts of the antenna and put it together with my Swiss Army knife, as the others only had one screwdriver between them.

Victor came out to have a word with me. He explained that Peter had been able to strike a deal with his boss. It was not quite what we had hoped for but was better than nothing. Victor had agreed to give them everything we had in order to secure the flight to Nordenshel'da, but a further $200 was needed to help pay for the trip and cover the chief's 'expenses'. This meant that the fee had been reduced from 500,000 Roubles to 350,000 per hour. The deal was that we would be taken to Nordenshel'da only, as part of a routine flight to Cape Chelyuskin. We had been told that we could only spend half an hour on the islands while the helicopter refuelled before we would have to go on and then return to Dikson. Peter had agreed this with his boss, then promptly told Victor that he would disobey orders and "Find something wrong" with the aircraft and postpone our return for twenty four hours, thereby giving us one day on the islands. For this he risked losing his job.

I had met two of Peter's neighbours the night before, who had invited me for a meal. Boris liked to fish, so it was little surprise that we dined on his catch. Lord knows what it was, but it was raw. You get used to it after a while, but it takes a lot of courage to take the first bite. Especially after reading up on the pollution in the Kara Sea. This was complimented by more cucumber and washed down by vodka laced with Latvian wine, quite what this was I do not know, but it tasted like prune juice.

After lunch, a little pissed (and I stress, this was totally unavoidable in that part of the world), I agreed to the tour of the island. We walked up to the airport and out onto the runway. We went inside to see the control room and radar. His deputy, who was on duty, was standing outside, far out of earshot of the radio having a cigarette. The technology inside was primitive. Bren would be quite alarmed I'm sure to see this archaic set up. In the next room I met Helena, who was the airport's weather girl. She had a greenhouse full of plants covering most of her gear, but it was interesting to see the huge mercury barometers and barographs around the room as well as the cloud radar. She recorded everything on tape and also sent it to other stations on CW.

Saturday 29th May 1993

I had a temperature. My cough was dreadful and I was worried that I might have the start of bronchitis. I called Boris and he said he would be right over and take me to see the Aeroflot doctor (what does that conjure up in the mind?). We walked in and as we did, Boris turned to me and said, "You must thank God you do not need the dentist.", as this hag walked in and entered her room of medieval torture implements.

The following morning came and I was feeling much better after a good sleep and rest. My temperature was down enough to warrant a trip to the shack. I arrive to find George on the microphone operating 4K4D, Dikson Island AS-005 for the award. Victor said that things were going well, but that we had a severe TVI problem with the neighbouring block of homes. He told me how a man and a women, in very ugly mood, had stormed into the hotel and proceeded to rip the station to pieces. I agreed to operate the night shift in order to put some QSOs in the log.

From the hotel, Boris took me up to the airport again for another tour. This time we entered the main building which not only held the waiting room and ticket hall, but many of the other departments it takes to run an airport. I was taken up to the main Dikson Island radio station on the top floor. It was a large room, with plenty of ancient teleprinters and old radio equipment. The radio operator, Helena, was exchanging weather reports with Cape Chelyuskin, Franz Josef Land, Pravdy and many other Arctic bases within a thousand miles or so. All exchanges were made on CW and frightening speed, quicker than a bullet. He fingers smashed the paddle from side to side, racing out a stream of unintelligible noise at well over sixty or seventy words per minute. This made my humble ability of twenty five seem pathetic. She called me over and begged me to sit in her chair and put on her cans. She then, through Boris, asked me to call Cape Chelyuskin. What!! I can't do that, I can barely operate CW anyway let alone with a Russian key, high speed and being watched intently by experts.

I bowed to pressure and sat down, grasped the paddle, only to realise that it was wired up the wrong way round, not a good start. So I swapped to a pump handle and off I went.

After dinner, I walked back to the hotel to start my shift on the rig. Conditions were good, signals though weak, were very workable. The IC720 was not the most modern of rigs but seemed to do the job. Unfortunately, Yuri's home built amplifier had to be keyed by a foot switch that was a hassle. In five hours I worked over four hundred stations, including many friends from back home.

Later that day it started to rain and I wandered over to the hotel to see what was happening. We were eating and just happened to peer out of the half broken window of the shack to see a pack of stray dogs chewing the guys of the beam! I ran outside and made a hell of a racket, gabbing fistfuls of snow and showering the beasts with snowballs. This only had a temporary effect, as they kept coming back. I decided to go inside and sat down again and picked up my bread and milk and continued to eat. All of a sudden there was an almighty crash. We rushed to the window, only to see that Yuri's vertical had crashed to the gowned and narrowly missed the windows of the hotel. We hurried outside and viewed the damage. The thing was bent, though still operational. While Yuri was making repairs, Victor traced back one of the guys. It had been chewed in half, no.....no, it had been cut! It had been cut with a knife! Sabotage! We now realised that our presence was no longer welcome in the neighbourhood, so, not wishing to risk a fight or an ugly scene, we decided to take the antennas down and pack them away, ready for our departure to Pravdy Island.

SNOW

I woke early on the Tuesday morning to find a thick blizzard in progress. Would this mean that our flight to Pravdy would be cancelled? Victor called round and collected my bag and baggage. We went back to the hotel, where Peter joined us and said that all was OK. Soon afterwards a truck arrived to take us to the chopper. I was given the job of riding in the cab with the linear and rig to ensure that they were not damaged in transit.

The weather was appalling, but the truck made its slow way through the snow towards the aerodrome. After twenty minutes waiting in the crew building, we were trucked over to the helicopter where we stood, freezing, by the aircraft. We were flying on an ME8, a rather old helicopter with flaking paint and a huge black trail leading from the engines along

the tail. All the gear was loaded through the huge double doors at the rear of the craft. The snow was still falling and we were advised to head over to a flight hut on the edge of the runway to wait for the go-ahead from the control tower.

Eventually we were on our way. The engine cover was locked tight and the rotor started to turn and the scream of the jet engine drowned any conversation. The atmosphere was one of tense excitement. I was very nervous of risking flying in this thing for four hours over nothing but ice. But I had survived so far and climbed in. I did however decline Peters offer of the co-pilots seat. Take off came and the noise was deafening. I was sat directly underneath the jet engine and it sounded like it. We built up speed and a steady pattern of shudders built up as we cruised through the zero visibility. Peter reassured me that the weather is a lot worse than this in the winter and that there was nothing to worry about.

He was seated in the radio operator's chair with earphones on. All communications seemed to be on CW, and the radio was of second world war vintage, with two huge units larger than milk crates, fixed into a huge frame work. He had to wait for several minutes for the valves to warm up before it could be used successfully.

The helicopter was almost empty, except for a large extra fuel tank that was strapped to one side. There were seven passengers and five crew and we all sat on a long bench on one side. Peter spotted a polar bear, the only one we were to see, and we all rushed over to one side to look, with protestations from the pilot.

After one brief refuelling stop, we eventually arrived on Pravdy Island. Island was a bit of a loose term, it was impossible to tell as it was just a raised hummock on a huge ice shelf. We were greeted by Serge and Sveta, the base commander and his wife and they led us to our hut. I had been expecting to live in very primitive conditions on the islands, even camp, and I had brought with me a sleeping bag that was capable of facing temperature of -30C. We were in for a surprise. We were put up in the old base station. This was a building of substance, with a large lounge/library with billiard table, dining area, plants and so on. There were two bedrooms, one which was to be used as the shack, a very warm kitchen with ray-burn and drying room.

No sooner had all the stuff been hauled from the helipad, that I started assembling antennas. After the vertical was up, I was handed the microphone asked to be the first to operate from Pravdy Island. I tuned into 14.260 and off I went. 4K4N fired up and soon gained the IOTA refernce of AS104 The pile up was huge. Immediately there was a score of familiar calls, GM3ITN, G3KMA, G4DYO, G3TOK and so on. Conditions were fabulous. After one hour I had made over 160 contacts, not bad considering the density of the pile, fortunately, the IC720 did have a split facility. Next it was Victor's turn and the Qs were mounting.

I went outside and started to piece the yagi together. The temperature was -2C, but there was not a cloud in the sky and the sun was extremely strong due to the lack of an ozone layer. I was frying. I stripped down to a shirt and ray-bans and my thin gloves, just to stop my hands freezing when I touched the beam. We added the yagi to the other arrays of huge wire antennas that were used on the island foe meteorological purposes. It was pure pleasure.

The landscape was so white, so clean and not a trace of the abhorrent conditions I had seen in Dikson or Norilsk. We were right on the edge of the island and were

looking out over the North East Passage, the sea of my heroes. There was no wind and the air was so fresh you could smell it.

I went inside through the huge double wooden doors and over the timber steps and helped George and Yuri prepare a meal. Serge and Sveta joined us and the Royal started to flow. The was much hilarity and exchanging of news and cultures. Sveta was outstandingly beautiful and the last thing you would expect on such a place.

The Royal continued to flow, and the next thing I remember was waking up at seven in the morning in bed. "Heavens!", I thought, I was due on the rig at midnight. I raced through to find George slumped over the rig, cigarette in one hand, murmuring into the microphone totally exhausted. I relieved him and shovelled a couple of paracetamol. Again conditions were fantastic. This was lucky, because the slightest hint of a flare would have killed the bands stone dead that far north. I had a pile of EU, W, JA, and the odd KH6 to boot, all at the same signal strength. It was a pleasure to work. Northern Europe came into its own around 02:00 GMT, Bob LVQ was a huge signal at that time and so were any other Gs that called, alas there were not that many at that time.

Victor awoke and I apologised profusely for the night before. He told me not to worry, he had done the same, but refused to quit operating. The log was a mess! A drunken UB5LGM could send CW, but not write it down legibly!

George had discovered the sauna and invited me to join him. This was my first sauna and decided to round it off in the traditional way, by rolling stark naked in the snow. I felt really proud of myself until I realised that Sveta had viewed the whole incident from her window!

I could not get enough of this place. It was beautiful, tranquil and so far away from anywhere. I was of course seeing Pravdy at its best. In the winter, gales of 150mph batter the station, often besieging its occupants for days. In the autumn, bears stalk the place and make it exceptionally dangerous to walk outside to take meteorological readings from the Stevenson's screens.

We were in no doubt that Pravdy Island was part of the Nordenshel'da Archipelago to the north of Nansena Islands. Serge had confirmed this when we asked. He had explained that the ships pass within a few hundred metres during the summer when the passage is open. Pravdy was so named after the second world war. It was originally called Katorzhny Island "Hard Labour Island. It had been torpedoed by the Germans in 1942, who mistook it for Nansena and then re-established and renamed it Pravdy on the 50th anniversary of the newspaper Pravda.

I paid a visit to Serge and Sveta in their house. The station was full of meteorological equipment and other bits and pieces. Sveta made me tea and showed me the furs of the Arctic foxes she and Serge had trapped. From our western viewpoint this seems unforgivable, but this was an environment so different from our luxurious surroundings. These people killed to survive, to make a modest living, and it was certainly not on a large scale, unlike the fur farms of Europe. She also gave me a picture of her on a ski bike. When I asked if I could see the bike, she admitted that it was broken. Curious, as I had not yet found one in the whole of the Arctic that was working! I gave her my S.P.R.I. sweatshirt and half a dozen mars bars, to thank her and Serge for their generous hospitality. They could not have done more.

All too soon it was late afternoon. Victor was on 20m CW and he was called by Peter, who said he had just taken off from Cape Chelyuskin and would be with us in two hours. I took the beam down, my Swiss army knife again earning it's keep, and packed it neatly into the ski bag. Victor continued to operate until the helicopter loomed on the horizon, its huge brown trail of gravy like exhaust scarring the ski.

I had a gained a deer antler and sack of rocks from Sveta, which proved to be troublesome as the helicopter was packed. I kissed Sveta good bye and thanked Serge for making this a memorable few hours. We climbed aboard and the was a fix and a pop from the engine as it sparked into life and the rotors started to turn. Incredible! The chopper was full to overflowing. There was over six tonnes of cargo and twenty three people on board, eighteen of those forced into a gap of only seven feet squared. I sat next to Peter on his seat while he operated the radio, elbowing me in the ribs every time he hit the key. I saw the pilot shake his head as we slowly lifted off. The engine sounded sick, and Peter told me that the helicopter was severely overloaded.

We flew about one hundred metre above the ice and I prayed that nothing would happen. This was one of the most uncomfortable moments of my life. George was on Victor's lap, Victor was asleep and Yuri was on a sack of food.

All too soon we were in sight of Dikson. What a dump it was from the air, especially after being in somewhere so pure as Pravdy. The trip was over. It had been a success with over 1700 contacts logged.

On the way back to the hotel, Peter made me an offer. My tribander for his portable mast. No deal I thought. But decided to give him the tribander for nothing as long as he promised that it would be available to anyone who wished to activate any of the islands in the future. This pleased him greatly and his wife told me that he got so drunk that night he just slumped in a corner cuddling the antenna.

We spent a further week in Dikson and made many good friends. Tickets back to Norilsk were like gold dust, hence the delay. Likewise from Norilsk to Moscow. We spent another night in the Norilsk Hilton, this time we had a hole in the floor. In Moscow we all parted company in the office of Boris Stepanov the editor of Radio Magazine, there was much hugging and back-slapping and the party was dissolved, our work complete.

Back in the UK the question of "Where is Pravdy" raged. I had been told, quite clearly that Pravdy Island was part of the Nordenshel'da Archipelago. But on later on later investigation appeared to be South of the Matisena Straits, the dividing line between Nordenshel'da and the Kara Sea East group. Roger decided that our operation could not be accepted as claimed but could be claimed as the Kara Sea East group. I fully accepted Roger's argument and subsequently have tried to ensure that everybody knows of the change.

I would like to thank: All those in Moscow especially Harry. 4K4BAT and 4K4MAL for all the contacts they made as 4K4D in our absence. Boris and Rita for their great hospitality. Serge and Sveta, George the chief and all at Aeroflot in Dikson. Roger and Gill for all their help and for the great opportunity. Victor George and Yuri and very importantly our sponsor **INTERAMI.** Not least of all to Phil, G4WFZ for his most vital part in the expedition, the QSLing! Thanks very much Phil, it is much appreciated. Special thanks to Peter 4K4BEU for making it all happen and for putting his job on the line for you, the deserving!

The 1993 Region 1 IARU Conference

David Evans, G3OUF (Chairman HF Committee)

Each of the three regions of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) holds a major conference every three years. Region 1 consists of Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the republics which were the former USSR. This year's Region 1 conference lasted 6 days starting on 19 September at the small holiday resort of De Haan on the Belgium coast.

The conference involved some 200 people as delegates, observers and IARU personnel. Some 49 Region 1 National Societies were present including 5 by proxy and a number of other National Societies outside the Region were present as observers. The conference was especially pleased to welcome ZL3QL who represented the New Zealand Society, NZART. To further illustrate the size of the conference the IARU staff, headed by John Allaway, G3FKM, the Region 1 Secretary, estimated that in all some 60,000 sheets of A4 paper were used by the conference.

The RSGB delegation was led by RSGB past President Tim Hughes, G3GVV, who is the Chairman of the IARU Committee. The RSGB delegation included specialists in many areas of interest and my prime job was to attend the HF Working Group (Committee 3C) meetings to represent the RSGB viewpoint.

In summary the following main HF matters were agreed by the final plenary meeting of the conference:-

a) that SM3AVQ would co-ordinate 29 MHz repeater projects. These would operate on agreed frequency pairs above 29 MHz. In the UK the Repeater Working Group is handling several applications on behalf of groups that wish to carry out experiments. As yet the RA attitude has not been established. The HF Committee has no objection to agreed frequencies above 29 MHz being used for such experiments, indeed it is pleased to see this section of the band being used as the sun spot cycle declines.

b) that the RSGB paper on wide bandwidth HF transmission modes was unanimously adopted. In essence the RSGB paper stressed that because of the high occupancy on the relatively small HF bands that inefficient wide bandwidth transmissions with the potential to cause serious interference problems should be discouraged.

c) that to reflect the trend away from RTTY to the ARQ data modes that the name DIGIMODES (Digital Modes) be used in HF band plans. This really reflects a change in attitudes and emphasis rather than a major change in HF band plans. New frequencies were also agreed for the International Beacon Project in the WARC bands. The revised band plans will be published in the 1994 RSGB Callbook which is on sale from the end of October 1993. The revised plans will also be published in the March 1994 issue of RadCom and will be made available via the UK Cluster network.

d) that a second RSGB paper on HF data forwarding be adopted unanimously. This RSGB paper called for an international study of current BBS forwarding requirements on HF and future needs. The HF Committee was concerned that mail forwarding

between VHF based National BBS networks could grow in an uncontrolled manor and utilise additional HF spectrum. The HF Committee paper also urged a study of more efficient modulation systems and data handling techniques. The conference agreed with the RSGB proposal and appointed David Evans, G3OUF to set up a sub-working group of the IARU HF Committee to study this matter as well as taking into account recommendations contained in a paper from the German Society, DARC, on the co-ordination of unattended HF stations.

e) that because of the special status of the 10 MHz band that unattended digital stations should avoid the use of the band.

f) that more stress should be given to proper operating procedures in Society publications. The HF Committee is currently discussing this matter.

g) that the paper from the Austrian Society, OVSV, advocating Morse code as a necessary qualification for HF amateur band operation was agreed with only a few abstentions. The RSGB abstained on this matter on the direction of the President because it was a matter currently being discussed by the RSGB Council. Incidentally the full report on the Code Free Consultation Exercise was available to RadCom for its October issue but will in fact be published in the December 1993 issue. The 3 page RadCom report gives the numerical results of the survey as well as summarising the opinions, both for and against a code free HF licence, which were received from some 1400 people who wrote to give their views.

The full report of the 1993 IARU Region 1 Conference, which covers the other parts of the spectrum and other matters, is published in the November 1993 issue of RadCom.

IARU REGION 1 CONFERENCE DEN HAAN SEPTEMBER 19-25 1993

HF CONTEST MATTERS

Ron Glaisher, G6LX (Chairman of the Regional HF Contest Sub-Group)

Within IARU Region 1, all HF matters fall within the scope of the HF Committee. This committee comprises the HF Managers of all the Regional IARU member societies and certain other nominated representatives.

HF contest matters are co-ordinated by a sub-committee of the HF Committee, which is known as the Contest Sub-Group, or CSG. This sub-committee comprises contest managers from all the member societies in the Region and liaison members from other Regions and Societies. There are also links to a number of non-IARU contest organisers including CQ Magazine and others. Although the CSG only meets at IARU conferences and meetings of the HF Committee, regular contact is maintained between the 70 or so members by means of a Contest Newsletter and by mail and fax exchanges.

The CSG met in formal session at the Den Haan conference and additionally held a number of informal meetings to discuss specific matters of interest to individual contest managers. The formal meeting was attended by 43 delegates from 28 Region 1 societies, together with guests from other IARU Regions. These included K1ZZ from ARRL, K3ZO who is the Editor of IARU Region 2 News and was the link with CQ Magazine, 9V1RH (Chairman of

Region 3), YV5BPG (Secretary of Region 2), ZL3QL (NZART) and VE3CDM (Region 2 and RCA (new VE Society). In the absence of the RSGB HF Manager, G3ZAY, who did not attend the conference, David Evans, G3OUF represented the RSGB.

A number of conference papers about contest matters had been submitted by member societies including the RSGB. These were considered by the CSG who decided if they could be accepted with or without modification, or were referred back to the originating society. Those that were accepted, formed the basis of Recommendations for approval by the HF Committee and formal ratification by the Conference at the final plenary session. All the CSG Recommendations were fully accepted by the HF Committee and by the Conference.

G6LX was elected by Conference as Chairman of the Contest Group for a further three years. DJ6TJ, who has chaired the HF Committee for the past nine years was defeated in a secret ballot and LA5QK was elected in his place.

The papers (proposals) considered by the CSG included:

IARU Region 1 CW FD (NFD)

Reserved Frequencies for non-contest operators during contests, Computer formats for log entries, Use of Clusters during contests, 160 meter contests, Contests for Novice Operators, Novice contests, Power limits for QRP contests.

HF CW FD (NFD)

Of major interest to CDXC members will be the discussions and decisions regarding proposed changes to the IARU Region 1 HF FD (NFD). This event is run under a Region 1 umbrella in regard to the date, times and a broad spectrum of rules. As it has not previously been possible to fully harmonise the rules regarding scoring, the current position is that each participating society can introduce local changes for their own entrants.

It was expected that the main threat to NFD would come from the Belgium (UBA) paper proposing that there should be a complete review of the rules for CW FD with a view to harmonisation of the scoring system and other changes. In the event, it was DARC who were keen for all entering societies to use a common multiplier based scoring system. DARC were supported by a number of other societies. The Belgium paper was opposed by RSGB who said that a scoring system based on countries worked was not acceptable to their members. RSGB also said that they wanted to retain a bonus for contacts made on 28 and 1.8 MHz. They received no support for this but were supported by USKA (Switzerland) in regard to the non-introduction of multipliers. As it was clear that RSGB were not willing to change their views, UBA felt it would be best if they withdrew the paper. DARC objected to this and said it was likely that they would make a new proposal at the HF Managers meeting scheduled for April 1995.

While the threat to NFD had been removed within the CSG and HF meetings, Belgium supported by Holland introduced a paper in the C5 Committee (VHF) proposing that VHF FD should be merged with HF CW FD. This was opposed by RSGB, DARC and USKA and was defeated on a vote. This proposal has been raised at a number of past conferences and has been

vigorously opposed by DARC, RSGB and USKA. The second proposal, also in the VHF Committee, was for the organisation of a 50MHz multi-mode contest to be held with common times and dates during the first weekend in June thus conflicting with HF CW FD. The contest would operate under the IARU Region 1 umbrella in regard to unification of rules, dates and times. Despite protests from RSGB and others, this proposal was accepted.

Speaking on behalf of the Contest Sub-Group at the final plenary meeting, G6LX reminded conference that there was an agreement made at an earlier conference that when a new contest was introduced under IARU sponsorship there should be no clash with an existing IARU event. Unfortunately, the Conference Chairman , PA0LOU, was unable to accept any alteration to the proposal and it was accepted by conference. The CSG will continue to oppose the common contest dates and will try and get the VHF Committee to move the 50MHz event.

CONTEST FREE FREQUENCIES

Currently all contests organised within Region 1 contain rules limiting the frequencies that may be used for contest traffic. These limitations apply to the 3.5 and 14 MHz bands, although some societies (including the RSGB) additionally require that entrants to their contests keep within specified frequencies on the 21 and 28 MHz bands. A paper was presented to the CSG proposing that there should be unified contest frequencies on all bands except 7 and 1.8 MHz. This proposal was rejected by the CSG as it was felt that the present arrangements were sufficient and no change was needed.

CONTEST LOGS

The meeting reviewed the earlier decision regarding the format to be used for contest entries on magnetic disk. Several societies they felt that the formats used by ARI (Italy) and EI5DI were easier to use than the RSGB program. This view was supported by a number of other societies who preferred EI5DI. It was agreed that the CSG would keep the matter under review. ARRL said they were now accepting logs on EI5DI. and were happy with this format. K3ZO speaking for CQ Magazine, said they had problems with some contest entries on several established programs, however, they were happy with EI5DI, even though some versions contained a bug! (NOTE: RSGB will of course accept logs on EI5DI).

PACKET CLUSTER USE DURING CONTESTS

This has been the subject of controversy at previous meetings of the HF Committee and the CSG. With the exception of RSGB and SRRL (Finland), all other European contest organising societies within Region 1 permit their single-operator entrants to use cluster information during their contests. RSGB and SRRL only permit use in multi-operator entries. The CSG had previously recommended that there should be no restrictions on cluster use and this was accepted by the HF Committee. RSGB said their members would not support cluster use in single-operator contests (or sections) and they would opt out of this Recommendation. SRRL said they would now accept the Recommendation.

SWL CONTESTS

It has become the norm at these conferences for someone to propose additional contests and help for SWL's. Den Haan was no exception, however, after discussions and an assurance from a number of contest managers that they would include SWL sections in their established contests, the papers on this subject were withdrawn.

1.8 MHz REGION 1 CONTEST

For several years, the RSGB and OVSV (Austria) have run their November Top Band contest on the same date and have attempted to merge these two events. This has not worked very well as many European participants have supported only one of the events and there has been considerable confusion. With the changes in the deregulation of 1.8 MHz in a number of countries, there has been requests from other societies for the contest to be Europe-wide. RSGB presented a paper on these lines and this received wide acceptance at the CSG meeting. It is anticipated that the first of these contests will take place in November 1994.

CONTESTS FOR NOVICE OPERATORS

The RSGB has been experimenting with some contests specifically aimed at novice operators. The QRS Cumulative series that were run earlier this year was described in a conference information paper submitted by the RSGB. This was well received and many societies said they would be arranging similar contests.

QRP CONTESTS

The CSG had previously agreed that Region 1 member societies should adopt two power classes for low power contests, viz. QRP Class 5 watts output and QRPP Class 1 watt output. These classes were confirmed by conference.

OVER, OVER....?

Brendan McCartney, G4DYO

Can one of the more experienced Club members please explain to me the meaning of the phrase "Over, over", or, as I heard on 160m a few days ago "Over, over, over"?

As a professional communicator I was taught that the word "Over" signified that the other station should commence transmitting. Unless the specific phrase "words twice" has been sent, the word "Over" should be the very last word uttered before releasing the tx switch. If I am the "other" station and my communicant says "Over" I press my transmit switch immediately and start talking. In the example mentioned earlier, the 160m operator (definitely the wrong term to describe that particular OM) passed a signal report to a DX station and then, slowly and deliberately said "O-v-e-r, o-v-e-r, o-v-e-r". I guess he took about 5 seconds to do so. Now assuming that the DX station heard the first "over" and started transmitting at once, the G would never have heard the reply!

To those who indulge in this strange practice may I suggest that under adverse conditions the more effective method of indicating that the other station should transmit is to say "over" quite slowly. The word is only said once but (hopefully) long enough for the meaning to carry in QRM. As soon as you finish saying "over" release the tx button and listen. With any luck you'll be just in time to hear someone relay your report!!!

Coming Soon!!

Antennas in Brown Covers ... by the XYL of a leading UK DXer. Watch this space!

GM DX CLUB

The GM DX Club has been formed. Run by GM3YTS, the club boasts 50 members, including the 10 GM DXCC Honor Roll members.

Membership is not resticted to GM residents; indeed , the club already has members outside of Scotland, including North America.

The objectives of the club are primarily to support HF DXing, and to raise money to support DXpeditions.

The club meets socially two or three times per year, and is open to anyone who is interested in HF DXing. Membership is £5.00 p.a. Anyone interested should contact Rob, GM3YTS.

Any club which is promoting UK DXing, and supporting DXpeditions, must be a good thing, and I wish the GM DX Club well in its endeavours.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Here is advanced notice of some CDXC social events.

The Committee will again be organizing dinner over the winter months. Last year's dinner, held near Bledlow, in Buckinhamshire, was a huge success. A date and venue have not yet been fixed.

Derek, G4BLX, and XYL Val, will again be holding their Barbecue to coincide with the London/Brighton ctycle race. This is usually held in the third weekend in June.

CDXC

During the last year, as Secretary, I made several pleas in the Newsletter for feedback on what CDXC should, and should not be doing. I only had one response, from Brian, G4ODV, who felt that things were going along in the right direction. The lack of any negative responses led the Committee to believe that they were doing the right things, abnd that the membership were happy about that. However, around 10% to 15% of the membership have not renewed this year, so perhaps that was the wrong conclusion. I would urge all members who feel they would like to see improvements to let Dave, G0HXN know.
73 Alan, G3PMR.

CW - FOR REAL!

Veteran CW operator Jack, VK2KQ, when he was a telegraph operator at the Tamworth Post Office, was told to stand by at 9am one morning as a message was coming through from Burren Junction concerning a murder case. Jack sat at the sounder until 7.15 pm that evening, when there was a change of operators, taking the traffic at 25 wpm. Apparently the message was in excess of 15,000 words. Anyone beat that?

QRL?

It remains to me a mystery,
It leaves me in the dark,
Why they tune up on a frequency
Then send "QRL question mark".

Tnx to G4DYO for the above two items.

SMC

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